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Current Intelligence Digest

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C O N T E N T S

(Information as of 1200 EDT) NR

GENERAL

Vietnam (Page 1) Situation report.

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Vietnam

The third Communist assault within four days against allied positions at Loc Ninh in northern Binh Long Province was repelled with heavy enemy losses.

The two-pronged attack, conducted on 2 November, was broken off with the help of heavy allied artillery and mortar fire. The Communists suffered a reported 238 killed in the assault, raising their losses over the past five days in this area to nearly 850. Friendly casualties during the same period totaled 25 killed, including eight Americans, and 118 (32 US) wounded.

Although the repeated enemy attacks around Loc Ninh suggest a determined effort to overrun the allied positions, enemy positioning in Binh Long and immediately adjacent areas suggests that the enemy strategy may be to draw in and tie down allied forces in another sparsely populated border stronghold. Elements of three divisions are in the area, and they may be willing to take substantial casualties in large-scale combat if they can attract allied forces away from the populated coastal regions and thus relieve the pressure there.

Recent enemy actions in the delta and along the central coast suggest that the Communists are using tactics designed to reduce the effectiveness of friendly reaction forces and create a maximum psychological impact upon the population. The latest example of these tactics occurred on 2 November in the southern coastal area of Quang Nam Province when the enemy conducted a series of simultaneous, widespread attacks and harassments on US troops and Vietnamese villages. Allied losses in these actions were ten US Marines and nine Vietnamese civilians killed compared with only four enemy known killed.

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